

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Diane Thompson and I am a member of the Board of Directors for the Kennedy Center, Inc located in Trumbull, CT. I want to express my sincere concerns to the funding reductions to the private providers. This funding reduction would threaten the critical services to individuals and families throughout Connecticut. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are not always able to advocate for themselves - we need to do so for them.

But not only that this is also a fiscal issue but there is a way to make a budget reduction (maybe not all at once) by gradually eliminating the State provider system currently in place. 50% of the State funding that goes to DDS provides services to 25% of the consumers (approx 5,000 individuals). While the other 50% goes to private providers who provide services to 75% of the consumers (approx 15,000 individuals).

- The annual cost for DDS to care for one person with disabilities is \$338,730/year. The annual cost for a private provider to care for the same person is **\$129,114/year**.
- The total cost to taxpayers if all residents with Intellectual Disabilities received services from the state would be \$1,138,132,800 vs the Private Providers at **\$433,823,040**.

It makes good fiscal sense for the state of Connecticut to increase its usage of the private provider system and to choose to cut these providers back even further could impact the budget negatively - agencies who are barely functioning at the currently levels will be required to cut back and eliminate programs even further - shifting the cost to DDS at their higher rates.

So please while looking at areas to cut - look at the impact on individuals who cannot advocate and on the true bottom line - not just the short term.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this issue.

Diane Thompson